

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A synchronous detector that detects timing of scanning by an optical scanner, the optical scanner having a light source that emits a light beam, a deflecting unit that deflects the light beam, a scanning
5 optical element that focuses the light beam deflected by the deflecting unit onto a surface to be scanned, comprising:
a photoreceiver; and
a synchronous optical element that focus the light beam deflected by the deflecting unit onto the photoreceiver, wherein the
10 synchronous optical element satisfies a relationship $f_m < f_d$, where f_m is a composite focal length of the scanning optical element in a main scanning direction, and f_d is a composite focal length of the synchronous optical element in the main scanning direction.
- 15 2. The synchronous detector according to claim 1, wherein the synchronous detector comprises a plurality of the synchronous optical elements and a plurality of the photoreceivers, wherein the synchronous optical elements have negative power in the main scanning direction.
- 20 3. The synchronous detector according to claim 2, wherein a plurality of laser beams travel toward the same synchronous detector, and the synchronous optical elements are arranged so as to focus principal rays of the light beams to a single point in a secondary scanning direction.

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4. The synchronous detector according to claim 1, wherein the synchronous optical element is a single lens that is designed such that one surface thereof is a cylindrical surface that is concave in the main scanning direction, and the other surface thereof is a rotationally
5 symmetric surface.

5. An optical scanner comprising:
a light source that emits a light beam;
a deflecting unit that deflects the light beam;
10 a scanning optical element that focuses the light beam deflected by the deflecting unit onto a surface to be scanned; and
a synchronous detector that detects timing of scanning by an optical scanner, the synchronous detector including
a photoreceiver; and
15 a synchronous optical element that focus the light beam deflected by the deflecting unit onto the photoreceiver, wherein the synchronous optical element satisfies a relationship $f_m < f_d$, where f_m is a composite focal length of the scanning optical element in a main scanning direction, and f_d is a composite focal length of the
20 synchronous optical element in the main scanning direction.

6. The optical scanner according to claim 5, wherein
the light sources are provided in plurality, each of the light sources emits a light beam,
25 the deflecting units are provided in plurality, each of the

deflecting units deflects a corresponding one of the light beam, and
the scanning optical elements are provided in plurality, each of
the scanning optical elements focuses the light beam deflected by a
corresponding one of the deflecting unit onto a corresponding one of a
5 surface to be scanned.

7. The optical scanner according to claim 6, wherein the optical
scanner is a multi-beam optical scanner in which a plurality of light
beams pass through the respective optical surfaces of scanning the
10 optical element having a form in which identical optical surfaces are
formed on top of one another in a plurality of tiers.

8. The optical scanner according to claim 5, wherein the
synchronous detector comprises a plurality of the synchronous optical
15 elements and a plurality of the photoreceivers, wherein the synchronous
optical elements have negative power in the main scanning direction.

9. The optical scanner according to claim 8, wherein a plurality of
laser beams travel toward the same synchronous detector, and the
20 synchronous optical elements are arranged so as to focus principal rays
of the light beams to a single point in a secondary scanning direction.

10. The optical scanner according to claim 5, wherein the
synchronous optical element is a single lens that is designed such that
25 one surface thereof is a cylindrical surface that is concave in the main

scanning direction, and the other surface thereof is a rotationally symmetric surface.

11. An image forming apparatus comprising a photoreceptor, an
5 optical scanner that optically scans a surface of the photoreceptor, and
a synchronous detector that detects timing of scanning of the
photoreceptor by the optical scanner, wherein

the optical scanner includes

a light source that emits a light beam;

10 a deflecting unit that deflects the light beam; and

a scanning optical element that focuses the light beam
deflected by the deflecting unit onto a surface to be scanned, and

the synchronous detector includes

a photoreceiver; and

15 a synchronous optical element that focus the light beam
deflected by the deflecting unit onto the photoreceiver, wherein the
synchronous optical element satisfies a relationship $f_m < f_d$, where f_m is
a composite focal length of the scanning optical element in a main
scanning direction, and f_d is a composite focal length of the
20 synchronous optical element in the main scanning direction.

12. The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the
synchronous detector comprises a plurality of the synchronous optical
elements and a plurality of the photoreceivers, wherein the synchronous
25 optical elements have negative power in the main scanning direction.

13. The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein a plurality of laser beams travel toward the same synchronous detector, and the synchronous optical elements are arranged so as to focus
5 principal rays of the light beams to a single point in a secondary scanning direction.

14. The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the synchronous optical element is a single lens that is designed such that
10 one surface thereof is a cylindrical surface that is concave in the main scanning direction, and the other surface thereof is a rotationally symmetric surface.